

10

AMYNTOR.

Defence of Milton's Life,

Primitive Fathers

New Testament.

In a Letter to a Friend.

L O N D O N,

Printed for **James Knapton** at the
Crown in **St. Paul's Church-yard**: 1699.

6498a
2/10/1991

97037

by S. Flannery p. 1/2 (1/2)

T
ha
wh
Pr
th
vi
of
bi
na
ci
C
in
o
n
C
n
a

S I R,

THE Design which the Author of the *defence of Milton's Life* professes that he had, in writing that part of his Book which relates to the Writings of the Primitive Fathers, and the Canon of the New Testament, was only to vindicate himself from the Charge of *denying the Scripture and declaring his doubt that several pieces under the name of Christ and his Apostles, received now by the whole Christian Church, are supposititious*; by shewing that what he had said in the *Life of Milton*, concerning the spuriousness of *several pieces under the name of Christ and his Apostles*, was meant not of those Writings which are now received by the whole Christian Church, but of those Apocryphal Pieces,

B 2 which

which were in many places received
and approved in the Primitive Times.
 This is what the Author professes to
 be the only design of this part of
 his Book : And though for his own
 sake I cannot but heartily wish it
 were really no other ; yet because
 there are several Passages, wherein
 he either so expresses the very slight
 esteem that he has for the Primitive
 Fathers, as seems to reflect upon our
 Religion it self ; or raises such doubts
 about the authority of the Canon
 of the New Testament, as *Hereticks*
 (to use his own words) *may draw mis-*
chievous inferences from, and by
 which *Scruples* may be put into the
 minds of *Sincere Christians* ; I have
 therefore sent you such short re-
 marks as upon reading the Book
 have occurred to me, and as I hope
 may be of some use to others on
 this Occasion.

The

The Principal Propositions which our Author maintains, and which I thought most to deserve consideration, are these three.

First, That the Books ascribed Pag. 38.
to the Disciples and Companions of
the Apostles, which are still extant,
and at this time thought genuine,
and of great Authority; such as the
Epistle of Clemens to the Corin-
thians, the Epistles of Ignatius,
the Epistle of Polycarp to the Phi-
lippians, the Pastor of Hermas,
and the Epistle of Barnabas; (for
about the rest which he menti-
ons, there is no great Contro-
versie;) are all very easily proved
to be spurious, and fraudulently im-
posed upon the credulous.

Secondly, That 'tis the easiest pag. 38.
task in the world, to shew the igno-
rance and superstition of the Wri-
ters of these Books: That Barna pag. 45.
bas has many ridiculous passages;

and by saying that the Apostles before their Conversion were the greatest sinners in nature, robs us of an argument we draw from their integrity and simplicity against Infidels : That the Pastor of Hermas is the silliest Book in the World : And that Ignatius says, the Virginity of Mary was a secret to the Devil ; which, I suppose, he cites as a ridiculous saying.

pag. 46.

Thirdly, That they who think these Books genuine, ought to receive them into the Canon of Scripture, since the reputed Authors of them were the Companions and fellow-labourers of the Apostles, as well as St. Mark, or St. Luke, which is the only reason he ever heard of, why these two Evangelists are thought Inspired. For to say that these Books ought not to be received now into the Canon, because the Ancients did not think fit to approve them,

pag. 48.

them, is but a mere evasion ; since many Books now received as Canonical, were not approved by the Ancients ; and some received by the pag. 57.
Ancients, are now rejected by the Moderns ; and Mr. Dodwel owns, pag. 73.
that anciently no difference was put by the Church between the Apocryphal and Canonical Books of the New Testament : and besides, no stress can be laid on the Testimony of the Fathers ; since they not only pag. 80.
contradict one another, but are often inconsistent with themselves in their relations of the very same facts ; were divided into various Sects, pag. 56.
who in those early days did, like us, condemn one another for damnable Hereticks ; used to reason precari-
ously, (as Irenæus the famous Suc p. 50, 51.
cessor of the Apostles, argues from the four Regions of the World, and the four Winds, that there cannot be more nor fewer than four Gospels)

and give hard names to those who
contemn such precarious reason-
ing.

These are the principal Asserti-
ons of our Author, which be-
cause they seem to me not only
to be false, but also to be propo-
sed with too bold a liberty of
passing censures upon the judg-
ment both of the ancient and
modern Church; I shall there-
fore in answer to them, and for a
Vindication of the Primitive Fa-
thers and Modern Doctors of the
Christian Church, with submissi-
on advance these three Propo-
sitions.

First, that though we are not
infallibly certain, that the Epi-
stles of *Clemens*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp*
and *Barnabas*, with the Pastor of
Hermas, are Genuine; yet that
they are generally believed to be
so, upon very great Authority,
and

and with very good Reason:

Secondly, That therefore, though they are not received as of the same Authority with the Canonical Books of the New Testament, yet they ought to have a *proportionable Veneration* paid to them, both with respect to the *Authors* and to the *Writings* themselves.

Thirdly, That neither the Belief of the Genuineness of these Books, nor the Respect paid to them as such, does in the least *diminish* from the Authority of the New Testament, or tend to make the number of the Canonical Books Uncertain or Precarious.

I. *First*, That though we are not infallibly certain that the Epistles of *Clemens*, *Ignatius*, *Polycarp* and *Barnabas*, with the Pastor of *Hermas*, are Genuine; yet that they are generally believed to be so, upon very great Authority,
and

and with very good Reason.

1. The Epistle of Clemens to the Corinthians, a * great and wonderful Epistle, saith Eusebius, was unanimously and without any controversie received by the antient Church; and † read publickly in most Churches, both antiently, and in his time.

* Τὸτε δ' ἐν τῇ κλήρῳ
ὁμολογούμενῃ μία ὁπταλὴ φέ-
ρεται, μεγάλη τε καὶ θαυμασία.
Euseb. Hist. l. 3. c. 16.

† Ἀνωμολογούμενῃ ὡς πα-
σην. Id. l. 3. c. 38.

‡ Ἰνγνωτῇ γερῇ. Id. l. 5.
c. 6. ex Irenaeo, l. 3. c. 3.

† Ταύτῃ δ' καὶ ἐν πλείσταις
ἐκκλησίαις ὅτι τὸ κοινὸν δεδι-
μολογούμενῃ παλαιῇ καὶ καθ'
ἡμᾶς αὐτὸς ἐγνώμεν. Id. l. 3.
l. 16.

And that the Epistle now extant is the same with that which was so commended by the Antients, has not been questioned by any Learned Man these many years, and has been lately proved at large by the Learned Doctor Wake in his *Genuine Epistles of the Apostolical Fathers*, and by Grubius in his *Spicilegium*, p. 261. whom I shall not now transcribe.

2. That Ignatius wrote several Epistles,

Epistles *; one to the
Ephesians, one to the
Magnesians, one to the
Trallians, one to the
Romans, one to the
Philadelphians, one to
the *Smyrnaeans*, and one
to *Polycarp*; *Eusebius*

expressly testifies; quoting a large
passage out of his Epistle to the
Romans, which passage is now
extant word for word in that
Epistle, being published with the
rest above-mentioned. And that
all the Epistles now extant under
these Titles, are the same with
those mentioned by the Antients;
is sufficiently proved by the very
Learned Bishop *Pierſon* in his *Vin-*
dicia, *Cotelerius*, and others.

3. The Epistle of *Polycarp* to
to the *Philippians*, is
mentioned by † *Irenæus*
that knew him living, and by
Eusebius,

* Μίαν αὖ ἐπιστολὴν τῇ χρισ-
τιανῇ Ἐφεσῶν ἐκκλησίᾳ γεγρα-
μένη, — ἐπὶ τῇ δὲ τῇ ἐν Μαγ-
νησίᾳ, — καὶ τῇ ἐν Τραλλεῶσι
ἐκκλησίᾳ, — καὶ τῇ ἐν Φιλαδέλφει-
ᾳ ἐκκλησίᾳ γεγραμένη, —
καὶ τῇ ἐν Σμύρναϊ ἐκκλησίᾳ,
καὶ τῇ ἐν Πολυκάρπῳ. *Euseb. Hist.*
l. 3. c. 30.

† *Lib. 3. c. 3.*

* *Hist. l. 3. c. 36.*
 † *In Catalogo, &c.*

* *Eusebius*, † *Hierom*
 and others, whose Testimonies set down at large by *Cotelerius* I need not transcribe :
 And that the *Epistle* now extant under his Name, at least the greatest part of it, is the Genuine one, is acknowledged by

* See Dr. *Wakes* Genuine Epistles, and *Coteler*, not. 1. in *Epistolas Ignatii*.

* all Writers eminent for Judgment and

Learning.

4. The Pastor of *Hermas* is incontestably a most antient work, being cited by almost all the Primitive Fathers extant, that lived in or near the second Century ;

† *L. 2. & 4. & 6.*

* *De Orat. c. 12. & de Pudic.*

† *Hom. 8. num. lib. 1. 2. & 3. de Princip. Comment. in Mat. Hom. 37. in Luc. multisq; aliis in locis.*

viz. by † *Irenæus*, by * *Tertullian*, by † *Origen*, by *Clem. Alexand.* &c. whose Testimonies are set down at

large by *Nicol. de Nourry* at the end of his *Apparatus ad Bibliothecam maximam veterum Patrum*, and præfixed

præfixed to the *Oxford Edition* of *Hermas*, and to that of *Cotelerius*. Whether the Author of this book be the same *Hermas* that is mentioned by *St. Paul*, though it is affirmed by many of the best and most judicious writers, yet is it not so certain, nor of such consequence, that we should be obliged to defend it.

5. The Epistle of *Barnabas* is also without controverſie antient, a work of the Apoſtolick Age, being quoted by almoſt

all the * Primitive Fathers; as you may ſee

* *Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. & Strom. 3. Origen. contra Celf. lib. 6, &c.*

by the Testimonies ſet down at large, in all the ſame Authors with the Testimonies concerning *Hermas*.

Upon theſe great Authorities then, though we cannot be abſolutely ſure that theſe Writings are Genuine, yet we may well conclude

clude and believe them to be so, notwithstanding the suspicions which some have raised to the contrary. There are also sundry other Arguments, which may be drawn from the simplicity of the stile and way of arguing used in these Writings, agreeable to the custom of the Age in which they are supposed to be written; from the conformity of the matters contained in them, to the Doctrine and Discipline of those times; and from the exact Agreement of all the Quotations of the most ancient Authors, to the Copies extant at this day: All which taken together, afford so *good Reason* to believe these Books to be genuine, that whosoever considers them, may very well wonder at the confidence of Mr. T. who is pleased to affirm that *'tis the easiest Task in the World to prove all these Writings*

tings spurious, and fraudulently imposed upon the credulous.

IL *Secondly*, Though these Writings are not received as of the same Authority with the Canonical Books of the New Testament, yet ought they to have a *proportionable Veneration* paid to them, both with respect to the *Authors* and to the *Writings* themselves.

Clemens was a Companion of the Apostles, and *Ignatius* and *Poly carp* their immediate Successors; and if the Authors of the Epistle of *Barnabas* and of the Pastor of *Hermas* were not the same with the Fellow-Labourers and Contemporaries of the Apostles, known by those Names, yet are they so undeniably antient, (being certainly of the first Age,) as to challenge all the respect that can possibly be due to any Writers upon the account

account of Antiquity. And as to the Writings themselves, though Mr. T. will not be persuaded to

† In his Discourse of the Authority of the genuine Epistles, p. 175.

grant with the Learned Dr. † Wake, that *they contain the true and pure Faith of Christ, without the least Errour intermixt with it*; yet this we may be bold to affirm, that in general they are so far from betraying either the *Ignorance or Superstition* of their Authors, which Mr. T. so confidently charges them with, that they contain a very good account of *that Doctrine and Discipline* of the purest ages of the Church, *which* all learned and good Christians heartily wish could be restored at this day.

1. The Epistle of *Clemens* is styled by *Eusebius*, (as I have already observed) *a great and admirable Epistle*; and was publickly read in the Christian Churches both

both before and in his time : “ And
 “ indeed it does not at all come
 “ short of the highest Praises which
 “ the Ancients have given to it ;
 “ being a Piece composed with
 “ such an admirable spirit of Love
 “ and Charity ; of Zeal towards
 “ God, and of concern for the
 “ Church ; of the most excellent
 “ exhortations delivered with the
 “ greatest plainness and simplicity
 “ of speech, and yet pressed many
 “ times with such moving elo-
 “ quence too ; that I cannot ima-
 “ gin what could have been de-
 “ sired in such an Epistle , more
 “ proper for the end for which it
 “ was composed ; what could have
 “ been written more becoming an
 “ Apostolical age, and the Pen of
 “ one of the most eminent Bishops
 “ of it. Thus the Learned Dr.
Wake.

His making the *Scarlet thread* hung out by *Rahab* to the Spies, a Type of the *Blood of Christ*; however it may possibly seem strange to such as Mr. T. was yet in the Opinion of the Ancients very agreeable to the Tenour of the Scripture, and particularly to that Type of the *Scarlet Wool*, where-with the Blood of the Sacrifice was sprinkled on the People under the Law, *Heb. 9. 19.*

The History of the *Phœnix*, mentioned in this Epistle, is confessedly a Fable. But he that considers that it was a Story at that time generally told and believed, as *Tacitus* largely relates; and that the best of Men never had any assurance of being preserved from vulgar and innocent Errors; will not be hasty in censuring an excellent Man, and an excellent Book, for making such a vulgar error

error the Topick of a Popular Argument.

2. The Epistles of *Ignatius* are written indeed in a plain, simple, and unaffected stile ; as are most of the Books of the Holy Scripture it self : but, whatever Mr. *T.* says, there is nothing in them either of *ignorance* or *Superstition* ; unless a *Firm belief of Divine Revelation* must be esteemed *Ignorance*, and a *strict Observance of the Laws of Christ* is to be called *Superstition*.

One Passage indeed there is in his Epistle to the *Ephesians*, which Mr. *T.* cannot but smile at: viz. that *the Virginity of Mary and her delivery, was kept in secret from the Prince of this World*. But he that considers the manner of our Saviour's temptation, and how the Ancients constantly, and (in the

judgment of the very Learned
 * *Grotius*) not without
 good Grounds, denied
 the Devil to have
 known any thing at
 first of the great My-
 stery of the Incarnation, will not
 for this passage condemn *Ignatius*
 of *Ignorance*.

3. The Epistle of *Polycarp* to
 the *Philippians* is a very valuable
 Monument of Antiquity, con-
 taining nothing in it unworthy
 the Character of so
 great a Father. * *Ire-*
næus calls it a most com-
 plet Epistle; out of
 which they that are care-
 ful of their own *Salvati-*
on, may learn what was

the Belief of that Apostolical Man,
 and what the form of sound Doctrine
 which he delivered in his Preach-
 ing.

* Sanè Diabolus majus
 aliquid homine in Christo
 agnovisse hoc quidem tem-
 pore, constanter, nec sine
 magnis argumentis, negant
 Scriptores antiqui. *Grot.* in
 Mat. 4 3.

* Ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ ἐπιστολὴ Πολυ-
 κάρπου πρὸς Φιλιππησίους χα-
 ρεσμένον, ἡκανοτάτη ὅτι καὶ
 ἡ χάρις καὶ τῆς πίστεως αὐτοῦ,
 καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα τῆς ἀληθείας,
 οἱ φροντίζοντες τῆς ἑαυτῶν
 σωτηρίας δύνανται μάθειν. *Euseb.*
Hist. l. 4. c. 14. ex *Ire-*
næo.

4. The Pastor of *Hermas* is a Book full of very excellent Moral Instructions, delivered for the the most part in casie and natural Similitudes, and these also explained at large to the apprehension of the meanest capacities: For which reason, though it was not received into the Canon of Scripture, yet (as *Eusebius*

testifies) it *was judged by the Ancients a most necessary Book, especially for those who were to be instructed in the first Principles of Religion;*

and was therefore accordingly read in Churches: And Origen (who was far from being an ignorant Man) judges it to be a *most useful Book.*

* In Rom. 16, 14.

But Mr. *T.* saith it is *the silliest Book in the World.* Why he should think so, I cannot apprehend, unless it be because there are here

B 3

and

* Περὶς μὲν τινῶν ἀντιλεέ-
ται, δι' ὧς καὶ ἂν ἐν ὁμολο-
γητοῖς πλεονῇ ἑτέρων ὃ
αναγκασιότατον, οἷς μάλιστα
δεῖ συγχωρῆσαι ἐκταραχῆς,
κίκεται· ὅθεν ἤδη καὶ ἐν ἐκ-
κλησίαις ἴσμεν αὐτὸ διδωμέ-
σχιον· Euseb. Hist. l. 4.
c. 3.

and there some few odd Passages scattered in it, very different from our modern way of Writing, which perhaps he can single out and expose ; And so there is hardly any Book extant in the World, which a witty Man may not turn into ridicule.

All the Objections which I think have been hitherto made to this Book, are these :

* Libri fabulosi sunt, in quibus contra Apostolicum consensum adstruitur Librum Arbitrium, una Penitentia, Solitudo Monastica, & quod memoratu dignum, purgatorium ab antiquâ in visione tertiâ profertur. Scultetus de Script. Apoc.

That *it contains fabulous Visions* : That *it makes too much for Free-will* : That *it assigns to every Man two Angels* : That *it favours the Novations in allowing but one Repentance* : That *it favours Monkish Solitude* : and, that *it speaks of Purgatory*. The three first of these Objections we shall consider immediately ; But the three latter are so *directly false*, that one would wonder

wonder how prejudice could possibly be so strong as to make Men see in any Author those things, of which there is not the *least syllable* or *hint* in the whole Book.

That the *Visions* contained in it are *fabulous*, we ought not to say, unless we be sure, either that God never afforded any *Visions* to the first Christians ; or that these *Visions* have some particular Circumstances, which prove that they could not come from God. But if it were so, yet taking that which is used in this Book to be no other than a Parabolical way of Writing, wherein the Church is introduced as representing its own Doctrine and Discipline to a Person in a Vision, it ought not to be styled *fabulous*, any more than * other Books of that kind which are written in our Age.

* Parable of the Pilgrim.
of the Prodigal, &c.

That maintaining the *freedom* of Mans *Will*, in the sense that *Hermas* asserts it, is a good Objection against a Book, I suppose neither Mr. *T.* nor any Man else, at this time of day, will contend.

That *Hermas* assigns to every particular Man two Angels, if the Titles of the Chapters were of any Authority, could not indeed be questioned. But in the Book it self there is no such thing expressly affirmed : All that the Author

there says, is only in general, That * there are two Angels with Man ; one of Righteous-

ness, the other of Iniquity ; and that when good thoughts arise in a Mans heart, then the Angel of Righteousness (that is, some good spirit) is with him ; and when evil thoughts arise in his heart, then the Angel of Iniquity, (that is, some evil spirit) tempts

* Duo sunt nuntii cum homine; unus æquitatis, & unus iniquitatis. *Man-*
dat. 6.

tempts him : Which perhaps is no more, than what all Christians believe. So that *Cotelarius* in his Notes upon the place, might have spared the pains of proving other Fathers to have been of the same opinion with *Hermas*, till he had shown that these words do *necessarily* signifie that *Hermas* himself was of that Opinion.

That *Hermas* by allowing *but One Repentance* for great and scandalous Crimes, favours the *Novatians*, whose Heresie consisted in allowing *no other Repentance at all*, than that of *Baptism*, is so far from being true, that he in expresse words opposes his *One Repentance* to *Baptism*, and says more for the validity and efficacy of that after-Repentance for Crimes committed by Baptized Christians, in this one little Book, than perhaps is to be found in all the other Writers
of

of the three first Centuries put together ; infomuch that *Tertullian*, after he turned *Montanist*, and had embraced the Opinion of the *No-*

* Cederem tibi, si scriptura Pastoris, quæ sola mæchos amat, non ab omni concilio Ecclesiarum inter Apocrypha & falsa judicaretur, adultera & ipsa, & inde patrona sociorum. *De Pudicitia.*

vatians,* exclaims with all imaginable bitterness against this Book for that very reason, because it was more favourable than any o-

ther Book then extant, in allowing Repentance to Adulterers after Baptism, which the *Novatians* denied.

That this Book favours *Monkish Solitude*, is also so far from being true, that on the contrary it even expressly allows † *Second Marriages*, which was more than most Writers of that Age were willing to do.

† Mandat.
4.

Lastly, So far is this Writer from establishing the Doctrine of *Purgatory*, that there is not one syllable.

syllable about it in the whole Book: All the places where he speaks of Mens undertaking many hardships, and so *purging* themselves from their sins, being as plainly meant of the Penances to be gone through, according to the then established Discipline of the Church, as 'tis possible for any thing to be expressed by words.

5. The Epistle of *Barnabas* was very much esteemed among the Antients: And though it must indeed be confessed, that it contains some very strange and allegorical Interpretations of Scripture; yet he that considers how much that manner of Interpretation was antiently in use among the Jews in their Targums, and how many important truths were that way conveyed, so that the Apostles themselves
in

in their arguing with the Jews did often make use of it, as we see in their uncontroverted Writings ; I say whosoever considers these things, will rather chuse modestly to suspend his Judgment, than rashly to upbraid this Author with the Terms of foolish and *ridiculous*.

And as to his saying that *the Apostles before their Conversion were the greatest sinners in nature* ; this does not at all rob us of the Argument we use to draw from their *Integrity and Simplicity against Infidels*. For supposing them to have been never so wicked, were they the less *Simple and Illiterate* for that ? Or is their Wickedness before their Conversion any way inconsistent with their Integrity after it ? But besides, these Words might be spoken with relation to such sins, as though very great
in

in themselves, yet sincere and well-meaning Men might be guilty of in their Ignorance; as *St. Paul* says of himself, that before his Conversion he was the *chief of sinners*, in respect of his blaspheming Christ and persecuting Christians even to Death, for Christ's sake.

In short, though it must after all be confest, that the Authors of these Writings used a plain, popular and unpolite Stile; that they were guilty of some Mistakes, in things wherein the whole world at that time erred with them; (for which *Mr. T.* is pleased to stile them *Ignorant*;) and that they delivered divers things, which tho' very agreeable to the strictness of their Discipline in the Primitive Church, yet the present times will not so well bear; (for which *Mr. T.* calls them *Superstitious*;) Tho' I say, all this must be granted; yet

yet since in general the Matter of these Writings is such, that not only the Ancients thought fit to cite them in their Books and read them in their Churches, but also the Learnedst and most Judicious Criticks of our own times, as well Laicks as those of the Clergy, have received them as genuine, and recommended them as *containing the true and pure Faith of Christ*; I cannot but think that the very great scorn and contempt, wherewith Mr. T. hath thought fit to treat them, is a very bold assuming to himself, and undervaluing the Judgment of the greatest Men both of the Ancient and Modern Church, and consequently a Reflection upon our Religion its self; and that after all, we have very *good Reason*, as well as very *great Authority*, though not to receive these Writings as of
the

the same Authority with the Canonical Books of the New Testament, yet to pay them a *proportionable Veneration*, both with respect to the *Authors* and to the *Writings* themselves.

III. *Thirdly*, Neither the Belief of the Genuineness of these Writings, nor the respect paid to them as such, does in the least diminish from the Authority of the New Testament, or tend to make the number of the Canonical Books uncertain or precarious.

This is the difficulty, on which Mr. T. seems particularly to insist, as if it were impossible for those who believe the Genuineness of these Writings to give any tolerable reason why they do not admit them into the Canon of the New Testament, as well as several

ral others, which are now receiv'd :
And therefore I shall endeavour to
be somewhat more exact and par-
ticular in giving an Answer to
it.

I. First then, tho' we have great
Reason to believe these Books to
be Genuine, yet have we not the
same *certainty* of it, as we have of
the Genuineness of the Books re-
ceiv'd into the Canon of the N. Te-
stament. The Books of the *New Te-
stament* , as it might be proved of
every one of them particularly,
were received at their first coming
forth as being written by Divine
Inspiration, and were quoted as
such by *Irenæus* and others of the
Ancientest Fathers : And though
upon occasion of some Disputes
that arose afterwards among Chri-
stians, the Authority of some few
of those Books came to be called
in Question ; (not to speak at
pre-

present of those Hereticks, the *Cerinthians*, *Marcionites*, *Manichees*, and others, who rejected whatsoever made against their absurd Opinions;) yet those few Questioned Books were so far from being (as Mr. *T.* falsely asserts) *rejected a long time by all Christians almost with universal consent*, that even those Books were not only kept entire from the beginning, but (as

Eusebius expressly testifies) were * owned by most Doctors of the Church, and were all along read together with the other Scriptures; and at last, up-

on the full and exact examination of all Circumstances, the matter being put out of Question, they were unanimously received, as well by those Churches where they were doubted before, as by

C

all

* Γνωρίμων δ' ἔν' ὅμοις τῆς πολλῆς. — ὅμοις ὃ ὁδοῦ πλείστοις ἢ ἐκκλησιαστικῶν γυμνασικοῦδρα. Hist. l. 3. c. 25.
Πεῖτρα δ' αὐτέραν, καὶ ἐν- διδάσκον ἡ εἶναι παρελίστα- μιν, ὅμοις ὃ πολλοῖς χρησιμῶς φανείσα, μετὰ ἢ ἄλλαν ἐσ- πεδίστη γερῶν. lib. 3. c. 3.

all other Christian Churches, into the Canon of Scripture ; and so have been continued ever since by universal consent, and by the uninterrupted Succession of Christians in all Ages. Whereas of those Writings which we are now speaking of, that which is the least controverted, *viz.* the Epistle of *Clemens*, was for many Ages thought to be utterly lost : and though upon its appearing again, the best Criticks in the World thought they had *good reason* to pronounce it *Genuine* ; yet they could not be so sure that it was free from corruption and interpolation, as we are of those Writings which were never lost. And now this Argument is of peculiar force against Mr. *T.* For if he thinks, as he says, that he can with all the ease in the World prove these Writings spurious ; (which not-
with-

withstanding his vain boast, he will never be able to perform;) he may at least allow those, who do not doubt but they are Genuine, yet not to advance them above their own rank, and place them among those which by the Universal Church have been received into the Canon of the New Testament.

2. *Secondly*, Though the matter of these Writings be such, as that they do therefore deserve very great veneration and respect; yet is there plainly something *humane*, something of *infirmity*, something of *fallibility* in them, for which they are with all reason thought inferior to the Writings of the Apostles. And this Argument is also peculiarly strong against Mr. T. For if he thinks, as he says, that he can with all the ease in the

World shew the *Ignorance* and *Superstition* of the Authors of these Writings ; well may he allow those, who so far differ from him in this, as to think they deserve the high Character of Primitive, Holy, and Apostolical Men, yet not to presume to equal them with the Apostles themselves.

3. *Thirdly*, When we have made the best judgment of things, that we can possibly at this distance of time, we cannot after all but pay some deference to the judgment of the Ancients, especially when assembled in a Council; and allow them to judge somewhat better in the Ages next after our Saviour, what Writings were of Authority to be made the Standard and Rule of Faith, than we can after 1700 hundred years : Especially since of the doubted Books,

Books, which were sometime read promiscuously with the uncontroverted, 'tis plain they received such only into the Canon, whose stile, and matter, and agreement with the rest of the Apostolical Writings, do sufficiently prove them to have judged wisely and upon good Grounds. But this Argument is of no force with Mr. T.

4. *Fourthly*, Therefore, and which is a direct decision of this Question, I add, that the true reason why such a certain and determinate number of Writings are received as the Canon of Scripture, that is, as an Authoritative Rule of Faith and Manners, is because they were *written by the Apostles themselves*, (who are acknowledged to have been guided by an infallible Spirit,) or which is all one,

were *dictated, reviewed and approved by them or some of them.* All the Books of the New Testament, except the Gospels of St. Mark, and St. Luke, and the *Acts of the Apostles*, are therefore received as Canonical, because the Church upon undoubted Grounds believes them to be *written immediately by the Apostles themselves*; and these three Books are therefore received as Canonical likewise, because we believe them to have been *dictated, reviewed and approved by some of the Apostles.* And this is a plain and direct reason, though Mr. T. is so modest to say *he never heard of it*, why the Writings of St. Mark and St. Luke, who were only Companions of the Apostles, are received among the Canonical Writings of the Apostles; and yet the Epistles of *Clemens* and *Barnabas*, who
 were

were Fellow-labourers with the Apostles, are not. And that this is indeed the true reason, why some Books are received as of infallible Authority, and others not; may be sufficiently proved to any unprejudiced person, from what we find in the Ancients concerning this matter. That *all Books acknowledged to be written by the Apostles, were always received as of unquestionable Authority*, is evident. The Question concerning any doubted Book, being, not whether the Writing of an Apostle should be received as of good Authority or not, but whether that Writing said to be an Apostle's, were indeed the Writing of him whose name it bore. That *the reason why the Writings of St. Mark and St. Luke were always received as of certain Authority*, was not because they were Contemporaries

with the Apostles, (for so were *Clemens* and *Hermas*, and *Barnabas*,) but *because* their Writings were particularly approved and authorized by the Apostles, is plain from *Eusebius* ; who tells us expressly that *St. Peter* received and

* Κυβερται τε τῶν γεγραμμένων
εἰς ἑνὸς τοῦ ἑκκλησιαστικοῦ. l.
2. c. 15.

approved the Gospel of *St. Mark*, and that * *it was this approbation that*

authorized it to be received by the

Churches : In like manner, † *That St. John reviewed all the Gospels, and confirmed the truth of them* : *Irenæus* like-

† Ἡ δὲ Μαρκῶς καὶ Λουκᾶ
οἱ κατ' αὐτοὺς εὐαγγελιστῶν
τῶν ἐκδοσιν προποιοῦντων,
Ἰωάννου — ἐπεδείξανται μὲν
φασιν, ἀληθείαν αὐτοῖς ἐπι-
μαρτυρήσαντα. l. 3. c. 24.

wise tells us * that *what St. Mark wrote, was dictated by St. Peter* ; and that † *the Gospel of St. Luke was only a Transcript of St. Paul's Prea-*

* *Marcus discipulus & interpres Petri, quæ à Petro annunciata erant, edidit.*
lib. 3. cap. 1.

† *Lucas sectator Pauli, quod ab illo prædicabatur, Evangelium in Libro confidit.* Ibid.

ching : *St. Paul* himself plainly refers to it, 1 Cor. 15. 5. where de-
claring

claring unto the *Corinthians* the Gospel which he had before Preached, he puts them in mind *how that Christ rose from the dead according to the Scriptures, and that he was seen of Cephas, &c.* which appearance of our Saviour to *Peter*, is no vvhere mentioned but in Saint *Luke's* Gospel, *Luke* 24. 34.

And in the first Epistle to *Timothy* 5. 18. he quotes it with the express Title of Scripture ; *The Scripture saith, The Labourer is worthy of his Hire* ; which words are no where found in Scripture, but in St. *Luke's* Gospel, *Luke* 10. v. 7. So that 'tis without great reason, that Learned Men have judged it to be St. *Luke's* Gospel, which the Apostle calls *his own Gospel*, 2 *Tim.* 2. 8. and elsewhere. And then for the *Acts of the Apostles*, 'tis plain they are an Account of St. *Paul's* Travels, * written before

* Baron.
ad ann. 61.

before his Death ; so that they are with all reason believed to have been approved by him ; and if they

* Sunt enim Acta *ἡ δὲ* *πρωτον* *λογον* *ἡ* *εὐαγγελιον* ipse suum agnoscit Evangelium. Acta postea ab Evangelio divulserunt, quibus commodius visum, ob locorum faciliorem expeditioremque invicem comparisonem, Evangelistas separato codice complecti, & ab Actis secernere. *Dodwell. Dissertat. 1. in Irenaeum.*

were not, yet * being anciently the same Book vvith the Gospel of St. *Luke*, they vvere undoubtedly revievved by St. *John*, together vvith it, and their Authority vvvas hardly e-

ver, that I knowv of, called in question by any, but

† Vid. *Tertull. adversus Marcion. lib. 5. sub. initio.*

† *Marcion* the Heretick.

Lastly, *That no other*

Books, however written by the Contemporaries of the Apostles were received by the Ancients as of infallible and decisive Authority in matters of Dispute, is evident. Eusebius tells us expressly that the Authority of the Epistle to the *Hebrews* vvvas questioned by some, not because they doubted whether it was written

ten

ten in the Age of the Apostles,
(for that they could not
not,) but * because the
Church of Rome
thought it not to be
written by *St. Paul*. The Pastor of
Hermas also (as † the
same Author tells us)

* Τινὲς ἠδυνήσαντο τὴν ἀρχὴν
Ἐβραίων, ἀρχὴν δὲ Ῥωμαίων ἐν-
κρίνας ὡς μὴ Παῦλος ἦσαν
αὐτῶν ἀντιγράψαι φήσαντες.
lib. 3. cap. 3.

† Idem ibidem.

was esteemed so much as to be
read publicly in Churches and
yet never received as of infallible
Authority: Nay *Origen* goes farther,
& thinks it to be not only a *useful*
Book, but written * e-
ven with some degree
of Inspiration; and yet
† imposes it not upon
any one to be receiv-
ed as Scripture.

* Quæ scriptura valde
mihi utilis videtur, & ut
puto, divinitus inspirata.
Origen: in Rom. 16. 14.
† Si cui tamen scriptura illa
recipienda videtur. *Origen*.
Hom. 8. in Nu n.

In like manner the Epistle of *Cle-*
mens, though the most unque-
stionable Piece in all Antiquity, * *Lib. 3.*
and (as *Eusebius* Stiles it) * ἀναμνη-
στικὴν παρὰ πᾶσι, yet it is by the † *Lib. 6.*
same c. 13.

same Author † elsewhere reckon-
ed up among the Apocryphal
Pieces : that is, as *Cotelerius* well
observes, not that any one doubt-
ed of its Genuineness or Excel-
lency, but only that they would
not reckon it among the Books
in the Delas yeaφns, to which *Eusebius*
there opposes it.

The Truth is, the unquestion-
ed Works of the Apostles were
not anciently (as Mr. *Dodwel* con-
fesses) kept in a distinct Book from
the Apocryphal, but read and
cited promiscuously with the Works
of their immediate Successors :
But then 'tis also certain, that as
unquestioned Works of the Apo-
stles, *whenever* they were cited, were
looked upon by all as infallible
and decisive ; so the other Pieces,
whilst they were quoted and urged
by some, might as freely be de-
nied or not yielded to by others.
Vainly

Vainly therefore doth Mr. T. object, *That they who believe the Epistle of Clemens and the rest to be genuine, cannot give any reason why they do not admit it into the Canon of Scripture.* And as falsly does he insinuate, that the Establishment of that Canon is uncertain and precarious. Could it be proved, *That the Epistles of James and of Peter, and of Jude, or any of them, were not written by those whose Names they bear ;* we should indeed be obliged to reject them : And could the *Preaching and Revelation of Peter* be proved to be genuine, we should be obliged to receive them into the Canon of the New Testament. But so far is it from being true, *That the Preaching and Revelation of Peter were so receiv'd by the Ancients, as by more than a parity of Reason, to claim admission into the Canon*

non with his second Epistle, and the rest of the some time questioned Books, that on the contrary these Pieces (besides the arguments that may be drawn from the Writings themselves) were

*Τὸ, τε λεγόμενον αὐτῶ καὶ
ρυγμα, καὶ τὴν καλεωμένην ὑπο-
καλυψιν, ἡ δ' ὅλος ἐν καθε-
λικαῖς ἰσχυρῶς ἐξομολογεῖται.
Ὅτι μὴτε ἀρχαίαν,
μὴτε τῶν κατ' ἡμᾶς τις ἐκ-
κλησιαστικὸς συγγραφεὺς, ταῖς
ἐξ αὐτῶν συνεχρημάτο μερ-
τείας. Hist. l. 3. c. 3.

received by so few of the Ancients, as to make
★ *Eusebius* think,
(though in that indeed
he was mistaken,) that
they were never quo-

ted by any of the Ancients at all.

What Mr. *T.* has invidiously urged about the Divisions among the Fathers, and their want of exactness in their Reasonings, I suppose will not move those, who know that truth is never the less such for being surrounded with a multitude of Errors; and that Men did not then write in a Nice and Scholastick way, but in a plain and unpolite Style, mixing

Argu-

Arguments, Similitudes and Illustrations promiscuously, which is the way of representing things popularly, and to mean Capacities.

Thus I have indeavoured to give a short Answer to the Difficulties which Mr. T. has with great freedom proposed: Hoping that what I have here very briefly and with Submission hinted, may give occasion to some abler and more learned Pen, to treat of this Matter with that largeness and clearness, with which so great a Point well deserves to be handled.

I am, Sir,

Yours.

F I N I S.

**BOOKS sold by James
Knapton, at the Crown
in St. Paul's Church-
Yard.**

Capt. William Dampier's *New Voyage round the World*. Describing particularly, the *Isthmus of America*, several Coasts and Islands in the *West-Indies*, the Isles of *Cape Verd*, the Passage by *Terra del Fuego*, the *South-Sea* Coasts of *Chili*, *Peru*, &c. the Isle of *Guam* one of the *Ladrões*, *Mindanao*, and other *Philippine* and *East-India* Islands, near *Cambodia*, *China*, &c. *New Holland*, *Sumatra*, *Nicobar* Isles; the *Cape of Good Hope*, and *Santa Hellena*. Their Soil, Rivers, Harbours, Plants, Animals, &c. Their Customs, Religion, Government, Trade, &c. Vol. I. Illustrated with particular Maps and Draughts. The 4th Edition Corrected.

— His *Voyages and Descriptions*. Vol. II. In Three Parts, viz. 1. A Supplement of the *Voyage round the World*, describing the Countries of *Tonquin*, *Achin*, *Malacca*, &c. their Product, Inhabitants, Manners, Trade, Policy, &c. 2. Two Voyages to *Campeachy*; with a Description of the Coasts, Product, Inhabitants, Logwood-cutting, Trade, &c. of *Jucatan*, *Campeachy*, *New Spain*, &c. 3. A Discourse of Trade-Winds, Breezes, Storms, Seasons of the Year, Tides and Currents of the *Torrid Zone* throughout the World: With an Account of *Natal in Africk*, its Product, Negroes, &c. Illustrated with particular Maps and Draughts. To which is added, A General INDEX to both Volumes.

21 W 1 8
AP 1785

